(c) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(d) whether Government propose to conduct any inquiry and to improve the condition of these Government shelters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) The Department of Women and Child Development is implementing a Scheme known as Short Stay Homes for women and girls. The Scheme is administered by the Central Social Welfare Board through voluntary organizations for women who face social and moral danger due to family problems, mental strains, social ostracism and exploitation. The scheme is meant to rehabilitate women within a short period of time. The services extended in these homes include medical care, psychiatric treatment, casework services, occupational therapy, education-cum-vocational training and recreational facilities. The Department of Women and Child Development has not received any complaint regarding the pathetic condition of these homes.

(d) The Central Social Welfare Board regularly monitors these homes through its field machinery/State Boards and if necessary, inspection reports are also obtained from the State Governments. Besides regular inspection, quarterly progress reports are also obtained from the aided voluntary organizations. On the basis of these reasons the institutions are given guidance to improve the functioning of the Homes. Voluntary organizations are also being guided by the Visiting Officers to implement the schemes more effectively. Wherever necessary warning and show cause notices are also issued to the institutions where functioning of the homes is not found up to the mark. Therefore, the Department of Women and Child Development does not propose to conduct any inquiry.

Study on sexual abuse

3256. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a study released by the Ministry has revealed the 15 per cent of 15—17 years old had been victims of sexual abuse including rape;

(b) the steps taken by Government to stop recurrence of such incidents;

(c) the role of women's NGOs in this regard; and

(d) whether Government have ever thought of providing support services like counselling for women, sensitisation of the community and medicos?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) The National Crime Records Bureau maintains data of rape cases belonging to the age group of 16—18 years instead to 15—17 years. They have reported that a total of 15468 rape victims were reported in the country during 1999, of which 3849 belonged to the age group of 16—18 years which accounted for 24.9% of the total victims.

(b) to (d) Apart from ensuring stricter enforcement of the penal provisions, the Government is attempting to bring about an overall improvement in the status of women and children especially the girl child through better education, health care and economic empowerment of women. Schemes for employment and income generation like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Support to Training and Employment Programme (STEP), Setting-up of employment-cum-income generating Units for Women (NORAD), Socio-Economic Programme (SEP), Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK), Swaran Jayanti Rozgar Yojana (SJRY) etc. are implemented especially in high supply areas of victims of prostitution and for rehabilitation of rescued victims of prostitution. Efforts are also made through print media and electronic media to project a positive image of women in society and to bring about changes in societal attitudes towards women and the girl child.

Women Commission's Report regarding buying and selling of Girls in A.P.

†3257. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken cognizance of the report of the Commission for women which pertains to large scale buying and selling of small girls in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details of the action taken by Government to check such type of misdeeds together with its work plan in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) The National Commission for Women constituted two Inquiry Committees to investigate into the alleged sale of girls in Ranga Reddy district

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.